

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER DIRECTIVE

DOCKET NO. 2021-361-G ORDER NO. 2022-18-H

MARCH 15, 2022

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER: David Butler

DOCKET DESCRIPTION:

Application of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Incorporated for the Approval of New Natural Gas Energy Efficiency Programs and Notice of Intent to Seek Net Lost Revenue under the Natural Gas Rate Stabilization Act

MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Petition to Intervene of South Carolina Coastal Conservation League (“CCL”) and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (“SACE”), (together, “Petitioners”)

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER’S ACTION:

This matter comes before the Chief Hearing Officer on the Petition to Intervene of CCL and SACE. The Petition is timely filed, and no objections to the interventions have been filed.

The Petitioners assert that on February 23, 2021, Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. (“DESC” or “Company”) filed an application seeking approval of four energy efficiency (“EE”) programs for the Company’s residential and commercial natural gas customers. DESC requests that the Commission approve each program, in addition to granting the Company the authority to 1) modify any of the proposed programs without Commission approval; 2) create a new Rider to Retail Gas Rates for recovery of program costs and the 9.9% shared savings incentive. The Petitioners further allege that DESC’s application serves as a notice of intent to recover net lost revenues resulting from the proposed EE programs in the annual Natural Gas Rate Stabilization proceeding under S.C. Code Ann. § 58-5-400, et seq., through which the Company may seek adjustments to its natural gas rate schedules and tariffs. Further, the Petitioners note that, with this application, DESC seeks to create a portfolio of cost-effective gas EE programs so that gas customers can obtain the same benefits currently available to electric customers. As a result, each of the proposed programs are modeled on existing programs available to DESC’s residential and commercial electric customers and utilize administrative systems already in place for the electric EE programs. The programs include the 1) Energy Wise Savings Store; 2) Residential High Efficiency Gas Equipment Program; 3) Commercial High Efficiency Gas Equipment Program; and 4) Neighborhood Energy Efficiency Program.

CCL is a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of South Carolina. As an advocate for demand side management and energy efficiency, CCL and its members

point out that they support the development of energy policy that is in the public interest of South Carolinians and promotes energy savings. CCL was a party to Docket No. 2009- 261-E, and to the settlement agreement adopted and approved by the Commission in Order No. 2010-472, in which the Commission approved DESC's initial EE programs for electric customers. CCL also has members in South Carolina who receive natural gas service from DESC and would be eligible to reduce their gas bills through DESC's proposed programs.

SACE is a nonprofit organization whose stated mission is to promote responsible and equitable energy choices to ensure clean, safe and healthy communities throughout the Southeast. SACE and its members are interested in promoting greater reliance on demand side management and energy efficiency to meet South Carolina's energy needs. SACE notes that it has members who receive natural gas service from DESC and would be eligible to reduce their gas bills through DESC's proposed programs.

After it has been determined that the Petition has been timely filed, the next question for the Commission is to determine whether or not the petitioning party or parties have clear factual support or grounds for the proposed intervention. S.C. Regs. 103-825A(3) requires that parties filing a Petition to Intervene in a matter pending before the SC Public Service Commission must:

set forth clearly and concisely:

- (a) The facts from which the nature of the petitioner's alleged right or interest can be determined;
- (b) The grounds of the proposed intervention;
- (c) The position of the petitioner in the proceeding.

Petitioners state that they have participated in numerous dockets relating to DESC's DSM programs for electric customers. Petitioners also participate in the DESC DSM advisory group process established in Docket No. 2009-261-E. Petitioners point out that they seek to intervene in this proceeding to advocate for their members' interests in reducing fossil fuel consumption and demand through cost-effective EE initiatives. Participation in this proceeding is aimed at supporting clean energy decisions that will lead to cleaner, safer, and healthier communities for all South Carolinians, according to the Petitioners.

My review of the Petition to Intervene reveals that the Petitioners have successfully satisfied the three criteria for intervention stated in the Regulation. The Petitioners' interest in these matters can clearly be discerned, as can the grounds for the intervention, and their position in this Docket.

Further, the Petition to Intervene was timely filed and there are no objections to the interventions. Accordingly, the Petition to Intervene of CCL and SACE is hereby granted in this Docket. This ends the Chief Hearing Officer's Directive.